

“During the year the police generally behaved well, and in some cases have shown considerable ability in the discharge of their duties. I would like to take this opportunity of placing on record the valuable services rendered by Sergeant Ngatikao, of the Avarua police, who was Officer in Charge of Police during my six months’ absence on furlough last year. Upon my return I found everything in order, and great credit is due to Sergeant Ngatikao for the way he carried out his duties during that time. He is the senior member of the Rarotonga police, and is quite capable of taking charge should necessity arise.

“In the High Court during the year the sum of £1,108 5s. was inflicted in fines, and out of this amount £711 19s. was collected by the police, and paid into the Registrar’s Office. Fines to the amount of £235 1s. were worked out on the roads, and the amount left outstanding at the end of March was £61 5s.

“Last year 328 dogs were registered, and up to the present date this year 292 dogs have been registered. Several dogs were destroyed by order of the Court, the owners failing to register same within a specified time.

“During the year nineteen offenders were reported for drunkenness; but when it is taken into consideration that on this island we have six settlements, and police stationed in each, the figure of nineteen for drunkenness covering twelve months is a remarkable low percentage. Speaking personally, I see practically no drunkenness on this island, and considering the Native population is near the four thousand mark, I think this is a good sign. The effect of straight-out imprisonment without the option of a fine in drunkenness cases has undoubtedly had the desired effect upon the Natives.

“During the past year there has been practically no serious crime committed here.

“I have had no reports from Resident Agents of the outlying islands of any serious offences having been committed on their respective islands, and feel satisfied that law and order throughout the Group has worked smoothly.

“The Au Vaine (or Women’s Committees) still continue to do good work, and numerous cases brought by these bodies have been successfully dealt with in the High Court. They deal mainly with animal trespass cases, and often detect cases when the police are otherwise engaged. The Au Vaine report all their cases to the police, who prosecute.

“During the past year 212 cinematograph-films have been censored. Out of this number I personally rejected eight, considering same to be unsuitable for exhibition amongst Natives. In thirteen other films cuts were made before exhibition was allowed. Films for exhibition in Rarotonga are now censored here, and it enables me to have full control over the class of film shown here.

“In conclusion, I feel quite safe in stating that during the past year law and order have been suitably enforced throughout the Cook Group.”

PRINTING DEPARTMENT.

Work in this Department is still being carried out by Pure Pokia, under the supervision of Mr. S. Savage. The following is the value of plant, type, printers’ material and printed stock on hand, as at the 31st March, 1928: Outside jobs—value when completed and delivered, £10 2s.; printed stock on hand—forms for various Departments, £51 1s. 8d.; printed books for various Departments, £32 9s.; bulk paper, £34 1s. 3d.; printed books on sale, £56 5s.; value of printing plant, machinery, and fittings, £228 8s. 3d.; value of type and cases, £150; value of material for use in working, £2 4s. 9d.: total value, £564 11s. 11d.

POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

The following are extracts from the report of the Postmaster at Rarotonga:—

“*Offices.*—The Post-office at Danger Island (Pukapuka) was reopened during the year; all other offices remained unchanged.

“*Savings-bank.*—For the year deposits amounted to £11,283 10s. 4d., and withdrawals to £13,020 5s. 10d. 188 new accounts were opened and thirty-six closed. Of the closed accounts nineteen were transferred to New Zealand, representing £3,101 9s. Taking into consideration the number of accounts transferred, the position of the Savings-bank is considered to be very favourable. Interest accrued to depositors amounted to £736 12s. 1d., and interest accrued to the Administration from investments in New Zealand £975 8s. 6d. On the 31st March 822 accounts remained open, with a credit to depositors of £19,665 7s. 4d., of which £18,888 is invested in New Zealand.

“*Money-orders.*—During the year 1,410 money-orders were issued, representing £91 18s. for commission, and £20,473 13s. 10d. value of orders issued. 582 money-orders were paid, to the value of £14,487 1s. The above figures show an increase over the previous year of £2,700 issued and £3,164 12s. 2d. paid.

“*Stamps.*—The new pictorial stamps at 2½d. for Rarotonga, Aitutaki, and Penrhyn, and the 4d. Rarotonga are now to hand. To meet local requirements the 3s. New Zealand has been overprinted ‘Rarotonga.’ Arrangements have been made with the Secretary of the New Zealand Post and Telegraph Department for the placing of Cook Island stamps on sale with the Marine Post-office agents. The above arrangement will meet a long-felt want of passengers passing through Rarotonga